

The Crowder family had lived in Milledgeville, Georgia for six generations. They were known all over the southern half of Georgia for the high quality of their peach crops. They grew them in the Chilton County region. Beth Crowder was fifteen years old. She was proud to play a part in harvesting the yearly crop of Crowder peaches.

It was late March when the Crowders realized they might have some trouble with the weather. The peaches were already forming on the trees when the weatherman predicted a late frost. A frost could easily kill the fruit on the trees. It could also ruin the crop for the entire season. The Crowder family sat at the dinner table and discussed ways in which to combat the impending disaster.

Finally Mr. Crowder decided to fight the problem with fire, literally! All family members and farm hands assembled in the peach fields. There they waited for instructions. They placed large metal cans up and down the long rows of the peach trees. Then Beth was responsible for filling each of the cans with old rags. The farm hands came by to douse the rags with gasoline. After the rags had absorbed the gas, Mr. Crowder dropped a match in each can and the small fires soon warmed the peach grove.

Beth and her family worked tirelessly both day and night until the frost had passed and the peach crop was out of danger. Beth was relieved that there were two more weeks before the peaches would be ready to harvest, and she spent a great deal of time resting.

Finally, it was peach picking time and the Crowder family spent many days up on ladders, picking the delicious-smelling peaches. Beth filled basket after basket until all of the peaches were picked. Then she climbed down into the arms of her father who also was glad that the job was complete.

The next morning the Crowders drove to the market to sell their famous peaches and were met by many people eager to buy the pick of the crop. The Crowders were happy that they once again could provide their friends and neighbors with the juiciest peaches in Georgia.

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